

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUSAKA 02263 031342Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 /039 W

-----062348 040139Z /65

R 031202Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6257

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LILONGWE

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 2263

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, ZA

SUBJ: SACKED MINISTER PROCLAIMS INNOCENCE

REF: LUSAKA 2256

1. PRESIDENT KAUNDA'S SACKING OF HOME AFFAIRS MINISTER AARON MILNER WAS LEAD STORY IN AUGUST 3 ZAMBIAN PRESS. MILNER, INFORMED OF CABINET CHANGE BY AUGUST 1 LETTER FROM PRESIDENT, DESCRIBED EVENT AS A "BIG SHOCK AND THE SADDEST MOMENT IN MY LIEF." PROCLAIMING HIS INNOCENCE, THE EX-MINISTER CONTENTED THAT HIS "CONSCIENCE REMAINS VERY CLEAR. I AM A VICTIM OF RUMOR MONGERING...I HAVE GIVEN UNDIVIDED DEDICATION, LOYALTY AND COMMITMENT TO THE NATION AND I HAVE NOTHING TO HIDE. I HAVE BEEN ACCUSED OF MANY MISDEEDS. THE THINGS I HAVE BEEN TRYING TO FIGHT HAVE NOW BEEN TURNED AGAINST ME...RUMOR MONGERING WILL KILL US AS A NATION." IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION ABOUT HIS FUTURE PLANS, MILNER SAID HE WANTS TO FIRST CLEAR HIS NAME AND THEN TAKE UP FARMING. "WHAT IS BAD ABOUT THIS
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DISMISSAL IS NOT SO MUCH THE LOSS OF PUBLIC LIFE OR BEING A MINISTER, BUT IT IS THE FEELING OF LIVING UNDER A SHADOW THAT WORRIES ME."

2. COMMENT: THE FACT THAT MILNER'S REACTION TO HIS DISMISSAL WAS GIVEN FRONT PAGE TREATMENT IN THE LOCAL PRESS IS ASTONISHING IN ITSELF, EVEN MORE EXTRAORDINARY IS HIS IMPLICIT CRITICISM

OF KAUNDA FOR HAVING TAKEN ACTION BASED ON "RUMOR MONGERING."
ALL OTHERS DISMISSED BY KAUNDA OVER THE LAST EIGHTEEN MONTHS
HAVE DISAPPEARED WITHOUT ANY PROTEST OF INNOCENCE TO THE
PUBLIC LET ALONE A PROTEST COUCHED IN TERMS CRITICAL OF
KAUNDA. THAT MILNER DARED TO TAKE HIS CHAGRIN TO THE PUBLIC AND
THE PRESS TOOK THE RISK OF PUBLISHING HIS CRITICAL REMARKS ID
TESTIMONY TO THE EXTRAORDINARILY CLOSE RELATIONS MILNER HAS
ENJOYED WITH KAUNDA OVER THE YEARS, WHICH WAS REFLECTED IN
KAUNDA'S REMARK THAT HE HOPED MILNER WOULD BE FOUND INNOCENT
OF ALLEGATIONS BROUGHT AGAINST HIM. MILNER PROBABLY COUNTED
ON THAT RELATIONSHIP TO PROTECT HIM FROM KAUNDA'S REACTING
HARSHLY TO HIS IMPLIED CRITICISM.
LOW

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Concepts: MINISTER COUNSELORS, REMOVAL FROM OFFICE, REORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 03-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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